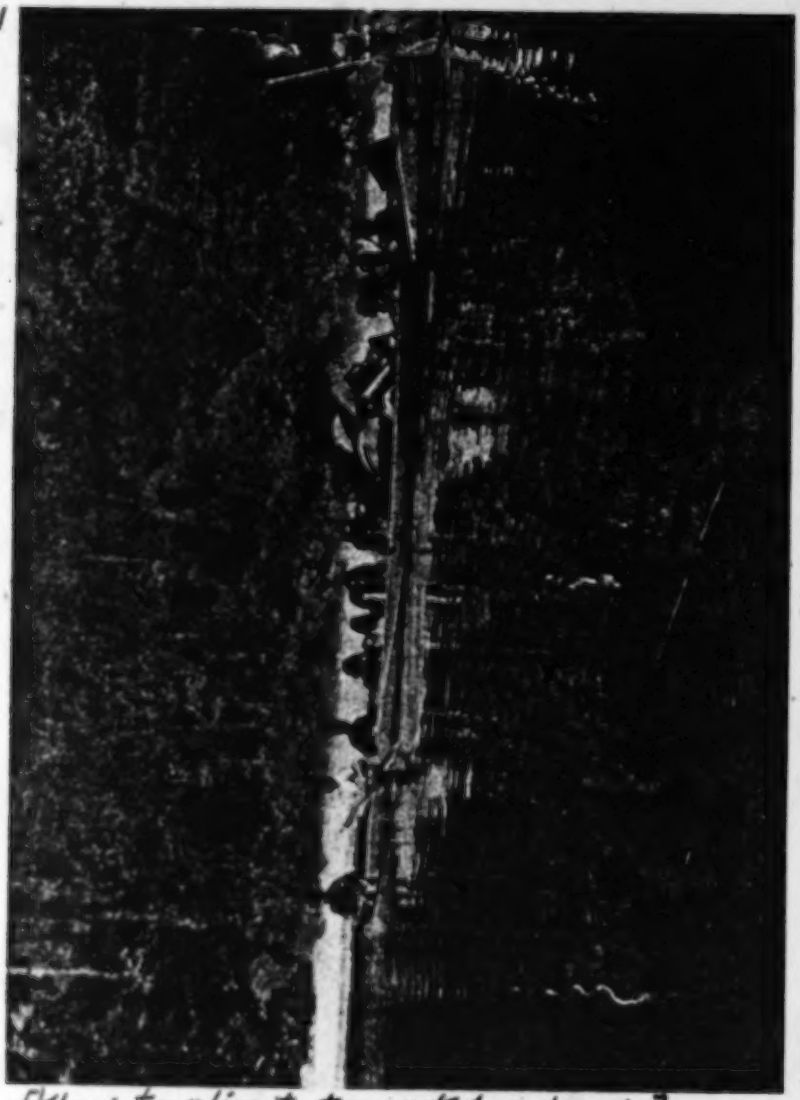
501



[Khasi traveling to the market in dugouts]

[704 E]

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(2) Soh-pet-byneng, literally 'The Navel of the Sky.' This is supposed by the Khásiás to be the centre of the world, and to be the highest peak in the hills. Its real altitude, however, is only about 4000 feet. (3) Sywer—height, 6050 feet. (4) Shillong—height, 6449 feet. (5) Dingiei—height, 6400 feet. (6) Kyl-lang rock, one huge mass of stone, about 500 feet high, and of a rounded form—height above sea level, 5684 feet. (7) Láit-blih—height, 5800 feet. (8) Láit-derá—height, 6000 feet. (9) Thanjí-náth—height, 4448 feet. (10) Nong-jrong—height, 4995 feet. (11) U Mún—height, 6221 feet. (12) Máo-flang—height, 5931 feet. (13) Máo-ká-leng—height, 5900 feet. (14) Már-py-nuá—height, 5600 feet. (15) Symper—height, 5700 feet. (16) Máo-sngi—height, 5810 feet. (17) Láit-már-kán—height, 5313 feet. (18) Nong-syn-rih—height, 5585 feet. (19) Más-keyn—height, 5306 feet. (20) Nong-khrong—height, 5606 feet. (21) Kalái-long-sngún—height, 5128. (22) Máo-lih-bah—height, 4252 feet. (23) Pattar-kyl-lang—height, 5755 feet.

The mountain peaks are of various forms and shapes, but generally conical, and capped by sacred groves. No roads exist to permit the ascent of carriages, but most of the hills can be ascended by beasts of burden, even without made tracks. In the eastern portion of the District the hills are covered with forest.

RIVERS.—No navigable rivers flow through the hills, the streams being all mountain torrents. On some of the large streams, however, near the point where they debouch upon the plains, small canoes are used for short distances below the rapids. The principal streams flowing south to the Surmá river in Sylhet are the following:—(1) The Kyn-chi-ong, named Jádukátá by the Bengális in the plains; (2) the Tanglá, called Mukái in the plains; (3) the Bograh, called Bogápání in the plains; (4) the Soh-ryng-kew, called Dhulái in the plains; (5) the Mungát, called Pein in the plains; (6) the Mán-tyh-du, called Hári in the plains; and (7) the Lukái or Lubá. The principal tributaries to the Brahmaputra are:—(1) The Kapilí; (2) the Um-khen, called Barpání in the plains; (3) the Um-iám; (4) the Um-tru, called Digru in the plains; and (5) the Ka-khri, called Kulsí in the plains. All the foregoing streams have numerous feeders of their own, but none of them are of any importance.

The Khásí and Jáintiá Hills are, like all mountainous countries, intricately watered, and the streams run over rocky beds, some passing through cultivated lands. As they approach the plains,

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at Rs. 480,000, or £48,000, and the revenue derived by Government from the quarries was Rs. 67,266, or £6726. In addition, the Khásí Chiefs receive a revenue from this source of more than £2000.

IRON.—The smelting of iron was once the chief industry in the Khási Hills, and a considerable quantity of the metal used to be exported into Sylhet, both in the crude and the manufactured state. Recently, however, this industry has almost died out, in the face of the competition of the superior article imported from England and sold in the plains at a cheaper rate. The indigenous methods of extracting, washing, and smelting the ore have been minutely described by Professor Oldham. The following description is taken from Mr. Allen's Report, dated 1858, at which date the annual export of smelted iron was estimated at 45,000 *maunds*, valued at Rs. 67,500, or £6750, at the rate of Rs. 1. 8 per *maund*:—'The ore is said to be most abundant and of the best quality in the State of Khyrim, especially at the villages of Nongkrím and Noyandri. A few iron articles, such as *dios* or hill knives, *koddlis* or mattocks, spear and arrow-heads, are manufactured by the Khásí smiths in the Hills; but the greater bulk of the smelted iron is sent to the plains for sale in circular lumps weighing about 4 or 5 *sers*. These lumps, called *birá*, sell at Chhaták for from Rs. 1. 4 to Rs. 1. 6 per *maund*. The best iron, however, which is beaten into bars called *peti*, sells for from Rs. 1. 10 to Rs. 1. 12 per *maund*. Khásí iron is preferred to English, in consequence of its greater malleability. It is much used by the native boat-builders of Sylhet and the neighbouring Districts to make fastenings for the timbers of their boats. When brought into the market, it is more than half dross, and it is this circumstance which renders the iron trade unprofitable. The cost of carriage from the Hills to the plains is about 6 *dnnás* per *maund*; and the traders, who are all Khásiás themselves, affirm that they get an average profit of only 2 *dnnás* per *maund*.' The tables of trade for 1876-77 return no smelted iron as exported from the Hills, but Rs. 7000 of iron implements exported, against nails and ironmongery imported to the value of Rs. 18,000.

THE MANUFACTURES of the District, besides iron, consist of coarse cotton and *rundia* cloth, plain silver work, rude implements of husbandry, netted bags made of the fibre of the pine-apple, common pottery, and mats and baskets. With the exception of the